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AUTHOR Gandara, Patricia
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the factors influencing the academic success of 50 Mexican-Americans from low-income families who received Ph.D., J.D., or M.D. degrees from prestigious universities. All of the subjects received their college and graduate education during the 1960s and 1970s, and were interviewed using a 141-question interview protocol. The study considered the effects of parent-child interactions, psychosocial factors, family structure, sibling achievement, parental support and encouragement, parenting style, parent involvement in school, school influences, curriculum tracking, desegregated schools, mentors, peer relationships, and personal characteristics on academic success and educational attainment. The study found that, in spite of serious economic disadvantage, most of the subjects' parents were doing precisely the right things in regard to instilling in their children achievement motivation, a strong work ethic, and the belief in education as the key to advancement. Implications for school reform are discussed. An appendix provides a copy of the interview questions. (Contains approximately 180 references.) (MDM)

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